

State of Michigan
Bureau of Fire Services
Department of Labor and Economic Growth



"These lighters do not have child-resistant mechanisms, as required by federal law. Young children could ignite the lighters, posing fire and burn hazards."

Language for recall by Consumer Product Safety Council
June, 2007

Legislation Announced to Ban Novelty Lighters in Michigan!

By Karen E. Towne, Bureau of Fire Services

State Senator Gretchen Whitmer (D-East Lansing) recently announced she will introduce legislation to ban the sale and distribution of novelty lighters in Michigan. Senator Whitmer along with State Fire Marshal Andrew W. Neumann and representatives of the fire service took the first step to ensuring Michigan will be proactive in banning these lighters.

Gas stations, convenience stores and tobacco outlets are just a few of the locations these lighters are available in Michigan. Oftentimes they are placed at eye level of a child and are sometimes mistaken for toys. At present, ten European countries have banned the lighters with several states including Arkansas, Oregon, Maine and Iowa initiating similar attempts.

The fire service is well aware that most child-playing home fires are started with lighters or matches. Since 1994, the first year of the Consumer Product Safety Council's child-resistant lighter standard, these fires have consistently declined according to the National Fire Protection Association.

National Fire Incident Reporting for 2006 shows Michigan had 902 fires as the result of children playing. Of the fire service reports submitted, these fires caused injuries to nine citizens, two firefighters and death to three of our citizens.

"It is not enough to warn children of the dangers of these lighters. This legislation is necessary to protect children from the serious consequences of unintended misuse" said Andy Neumann, State Fire Marshal.

Additional information to share in your community is available at:

<http://www.theideabank.com/psa/NoveltyLightersTV.html>